



FS Direct

Direct Communication to Foreign Service Employees and Family Members
Published by the Family Liaison Office, Department of State

What's Inside

[From FLO Director](#)

[Click Your Way to More Resources](#)

[Checklist for Washington Area Employment](#)

[FLO Hires New Employment Program Coordinator](#)

[SNAP Moves Forward](#)

[AAFSW Elects New President – New Initiatives Underway](#)

[Evacuation Update](#)

[Lack of Space in Basic Consular Course Limits EFM Opportunities for Training](#)

[Long-Term Care Insurance Update](#)

[Child Care Tuition Assistance \(Subsidy\) Program Expanded](#)

[FLO Expands CLO Training from 5 to 7 Days](#)

[July 4th Picnic](#)

[Summer Visits: Checking on Elderly Parents](#)

FS Direct Subscriptions

Welcome to the June 2002 edition of *FS Direct*. To keep the publication user-friendly and simple, we have listed the articles in the sidebar to the left. To subscribe to *FS Direct*, email flo@state.gov or visit the FLO area of the AAFSW web site at <http://www.aafsw.org> and click on FLO newsletters. *FS Direct* is also available on the FLO Internet web site at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo>

From FLO Director Faye Barnes

Bilateral Work Agreements and *de facto* Work Arrangements

I just returned from a short trip to Brussels where I met with Embassy and local officials to discuss concerns we have with lack of reciprocity in our *de facto* work arrangement. Brussels is one of the 10 posts where we are piloting the Spouse Networking Assistance Program (SNAP) to assist spouses with locating employment on the local economy. Therefore it is important to have a program in place that makes it possible to get a work permit in a short period of time. As we expand this local economy employment assistance, we are learning from posts that the work permit process often does not work smoothly.

FLO has been managing the bilateral portfolio for over 20 years. In fact, if you check our web site <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/2075.pdf> you will note that there are 138 bilaterals and de factos listed. From the experiences of spouses overseas, it is evident that these agreements are not all functional. We need to hear from you if you have had any experience, positive or negative, in trying to get a work permit abroad. The Family Member Employment Report (FAMER) lists details about work permits for individual countries. To assure the accuracy of our information, we need to hear from spouses out there if these agreements are not working! Katie Hokensen, FLO's new Employment Coordinator, is responsible for managing this portfolio. Contact her at flo@state.gov.

Foreign Service Youth Award

The Foreign Service Youth Awards, given annually by the Foreign Service Youth Foundation (FSYF) with the support of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide (AAFSW), recognize Foreign Service teenagers who demonstrate outstanding leadership in community or service to their peers.

This year there were two awards. Two teens posted to Burkina Faso shared one award. They were selected for their contributions to two communities: their community in Copenhagen, where they attend school, and for the services to the community in Ouagadougou, where their father is posted. These resourceful young teens established a program to collect funds and items from their relatively prosperous Copenhagen environment for the less fortunate in Ouagadougou. They assisted an orphanage and also during their holidays at post, set up a summer camp for other children who were less fortunate.

The second FSY Award winner is a teen from the Consulate in Frankfurt. This teen was nominated and selected for his work as a “teen CLO,” organizing events and bringing a focus to the young people in this large consulate community. He self selected to do this work, organizing events, writing reports of his activities, and established a page in the post’s newsletter. His program has grown to include a “female teen CLO!”

Congratulations to these talented young people and to the other worthy nominees.

Click Your Way to More Resources

FLO Homepage on the Internet <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo>

CRISIS SUPPORT

- **Evacuation Questions and Answers** – Commonly asked questions about evacuation subsistence allowance (SEA) and safe haven regulations are answered here.
<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/10638.htm>
- **Evacuation Plan: Don’t Leave Home Without It!** – Updated in May 2002, this is a helpful checklist for use before, during and after an evacuation.
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/2083.pdf>
- **Welcome Back: Evacuation Packet** – This booklet contains necessary information for evacuees, including evacuation regulations, subsistence evacuation allowance information (SEA), SEA application forms, and interagency information.
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/2115.pdf>
- Other questions about evacuations can be addressed to flo@state.gov.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH

- **Education Options for Foreign Service Families** - New updates include: Washington Area Summer Programs and Washington Area Schools information.
<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/7232.htm>

FAMILY MEMBER EMPLOYMENT

- State Magazine <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/10798.pdf> (page 17)

- **Negotiating a Salary Package** <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/10702.htm>
- January 2002 issue of **Net Expat** features an article by Debbie Thompson, FLO's Special Employment Initiatives Coordinator.
<http://www.netexpat.com/IndexNewsLetter.html> (click on January issue)
- *Foreign Service Journal* article **The Reality Of Foreign Service Spousal Employment**, written by Shawn Dorman. <http://www.afsa.org/fsj/current.html>
- **Popular International Job Search and ExPat Web Sites**
<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/4510.htm>

RETURNING TO WASHINGTON / EVACUEES

- Find "reentry" information and links on our web site at
<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/reentry/>

Checklist for Washington Area Employment

Rotation time is upon us. In order to make your employment transition a smooth one, we provide the following checklist for your return to the Washington metropolitan area job market.

- ❑ **Subscribe to *The Network*.** Send an email to flo@state.gov. The Family Liaison Office will add your name to the mailing list for the electronic publication which includes job listings in the government and private sectors. *The Network* is also a valuable resource for workshops and continuing education opportunities.
- ❑ **Speaking of networking – just do it.** Spread the word among former colleagues, supervisors, and employers that you are returning to the area and are actively seeking employment. If you are working in the mission and have executive order eligibility, send an email to the Bureau FMA/PIT coordinator and ask them to keep you in mind for any future employment opportunities.
- ❑ **Take the time to check out our Internet web site at** <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo>. Click on Family Member Employment. You will be led to a variety of employment options and links to other organizations. You can also view the publications available via the FLO Direct Communication Project.
- ❑ **Call the FLO office**, (202) 647-1076, to schedule an appointment for a counseling and referral session. Prior to your arrival, it would be helpful if you could give us some idea of where you would like to focus your search. We ask that you bring with you an updated resume or other application and, for those of you who want to continue government service, a copy of your most recent personnel action (SF-50). Hand carry these items and other important employment paperwork with you when returning to the United States. For a listing of items to hand carry, check the FLO internet web site at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/4959.htm>.

- ❑ **Register for FSI's Transition Center course MQ704 - Targeting the Job Market.** Participants learn to use their Foreign Service experience in forming a comprehensive employment plan. The course assists participants in developing job searching skills through hands-on experiences with self-assessment, networking, resume writing, and interviewing. The 2-day course is held 4 times each year. Upcoming dates are July 11/12 and October 22/23, 2002. For more information, call 703-302-7267, email FSITCTraining@state.gov, or visit FSI's Internet web site at <http://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/c6951.htm>

FLO Hires New Employment Program Coordinator

Katie Hokenson began as the new Employment Program Coordinator at the Family Liaison Office, May 06, 2002. Katie joined the Foreign Service lifestyle in 1969 and accompanied her spouse and two children on overseas postings to Saigon, Taipei, Jakarta, Manila, Canberra, and Rome.

Katie comes to FLO from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) where she worked as an Administrative Liaison Officer, handling Human Resources issues and interagency corporation. Past accomplishments include working in the Bureau of European Affairs as a Management Analyst. In that capacity, she managed the Bureau's PIT program for family member employment, participated in the working group that set up the Professional Associates Program, and administered the Volunteer Student Intern Program. She also served on The Hill as a staff assistant in the Office of the Senate Sergeant at Arms, and as Community Liaison Office coordinator in Rome.

During the Clinton-Gore administration, Katie and a colleague drafted Reinventing Government Paper #13, a proposal for family member employment in the Department of State.

With her demonstrated commitment to public service and USG employment, Katie believes in making changes from within. Her FLO portfolio includes: advocating for improved family member employment programs within the Department of State and other agencies; serving as the employment team leader; coordinating bilateral work agreements and *de facto* work arrangements; serving on the Department of State Employment Working Group; and advising family members interested in government employment. She can be reached at flo@state.gov.

Katie is a native of Washington, DC. She replaces Paula Riddle who left FLO in February to join the Foreign Service as an HR Specialist.

SNAP Moves Forward: Local Employment Advisors Hired in 10 Countries

The Family Liaison Office's Spouse Networking Assistance Program (SNAP) began delivering services in **London, Brussels, Warsaw, Krakow, Cairo, Singapore, Seoul, Tokyo, Mexico City, Monterrey, Guadalajara, Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal** in May, 2002. Local Employment Advisors (LEAs) were hired in each location to assist spouses with a variety of services. **Santiago** is also on the list, but at the present time is still in the process of hiring an LEA.

The program is designed to help spouses identify work opportunities on the local economy, outside the U.S. mission. Debbie Thompson, FLO's Special Employment Initiatives Coordinator, traveled this month to Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo, and Bangkok to assist newly hired LEAs with their SNAP portfolios, conduct employment workshops and assessing possibilities for expansion of this program. Spouses located at or relocating to a SNAP post who are interested in pursuing local economy employment should contact a Local Employment Adviser.

LEA Contact Information can be obtained from the Family Liaison Office by emailing flo@state.gov

AAFSW Elects New President – New Initiatives Underway

Terri Williams, spouse of a retired Foreign Service officer and former CLO Support Officer with the Family Liaison Office, was elected President of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide (AAFSW) in May 2002. She replaces Mette Beecroft. "We have several important initiatives," says Williams, the first of which is working hard with AFSA to further the action on the **PIT Retirement Buyback legislation**. "We have been busy conducting a campaign to send letters to the congressmen and women who can help overcome the inequities that were inadvertently created for many of our PIT employees," she said. Other AAFSW initiatives for 2002-2003 include increased membership and **fundraising opportunities**. The **new membership drive** kicks off this fall. For more information on the PIT Retirement Buyback and other AAFSW activities and programs, visit their web site at <http://www.aafsw.org>

Lack of Space in Basic Consular Course Limits EFM Opportunities for Training

The Family Liaison Office coordinates family member enrollment in functional training at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center. Posts and eligible family members (EFMs) should be aware of the current enrollment situation, especially with regard to the Basic Consular Course. During the past decade when officer hiring in the Department was low, family members trained for and effectively carried out consular functions at many posts. Enrollment in the Basic Consular Course was generally not difficult.

With the success of the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative (DRI), hiring of junior officers is at an all time high. Consequently, functional training opportunities for EFMs at FSI are severely limited. Enrollment, as always, is on a space available basis, and the new hires have placed real limits on class availability. The Family Liaison Office is working closely with FSI to assure that every possible opportunity for EFMs is maximized.

Family member applicants for Consular Training must contact Vanja Huth huthvs@state.gov in FLO. The applicant's name is placed on a waiting list with priority enrollment for EFMs going to posts with the greatest need. The applicant has to pass an English/Aptitude self-assessment pre-test prior to enrollment. All candidates must be U.S. citizens. Applicants should be aware that since enrollment is strictly space available, slots sometimes open at the last minute. Applicant availability on short notice often becomes a critical selection factor.

Indeed, enrollment in all functional training will be limited for the duration of the DRI. EFM enrollment in language classes, also on a space available basis, continues to be handled through the employee's Career Development Officer.

The Overseas Briefing Center offers a full range of courses preparatory to overseas assignment and availability in these courses is generally very good.

Evacuation Update

Due to the situation in India and Pakistan, FLO welcomed back evacuees returning to the United States. As of June 10, 2002, the following posts (see below) are on evacuation status. The Family Liaison Office is hosting three CLO coordinators who are working in the FLO Office meeting the needs of their evacuated communities. We encourage Foreign Service personnel and their families to become familiar with evacuation resources on our FLO web site. Contingency planning can help employees and family members with preparation in case of an evacuation from post. Visit

<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c1991.htm> for more information. Questions should be addressed to flo@state.gov

Child Care Tuition Assistance (Subsidy) Program Expanded

On May 31, 2002, in a Departmental Notice, the Department of State announced that Child Care Tuition Assistance benefits will be expanded as of May 2002. "We are hopeful that this initiative will provide an even greater benefit for those already in the program and be an incentive for others who might seek to improve the quality of their current child care if such subsidies were available," said the notice.

The notice is repeated here:

"On November 12, 2001, President Bush signed permanent legislation which permits federal agencies at their discretion to use appropriated funds to assist their lower income employees with the high cost of quality child care. In order to qualify, the total family income of an employee parent (or guardian) cannot exceed \$60,000. Additionally, the children cannot exceed the age of 13 (18 if disabled) and must be placed in licensed day care, home care or after school care.

"Implemented on December 31, 2001, this domestic-based program is currently subsidizing child care costs for 49 children of eligible families. The former compensation table allowed for a total reimbursement of between 20% to 50% of total weekly care costs. Starting in May, 2002 employees meeting the same eligibility criteria will be assisted as follows:

If the eligible employee's total Family income is ...	then the plan will pay this percentage of the participant's eligible child care expenses.
Over \$60,000	0%
\$50,000 - \$60,000	35%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	50%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	65%
Under \$30,000	80%

“Department of State employees seeking general information on the program or detailed guidance on how to apply, should refer to the Office of Employee Relations Intranet site: http://hrweb.hr.stat.gov/er/worklife/child_care.html

“Additional questions or comments should be addressed to CCTAP@state.gov. Employee Relations will respond to messages at this site within two working days. Questions of a more urgent nature may be directed to HR/ER/WLP, tel: (202) 261-8164.”

FLO Expands CLO Training from 5 to 7 Days

Community Liaison Offices in Embassies and Consulates worldwide continue to grow in number. As of June 2002, the total has reached 175 offices worldwide. The number of actual Community Liaison Office coordinators is greater, at 196, due to job sharing. This figure, however, does not include CLO assistants or newsletters editors, positions that normally report to the CLO.

Thus far in FY 02, the Family Liaison Office has trained 38% of the worldwide CLO corps. With the cancellation of two Washington conferences last fall after 9/11, we reorganized and conducted two training sessions in February and March 2002. Previously, the maximum number of CLO participants per conference was 24. In February, we accepted 34 participants. In March, we included 33.

In FY 02, FLO has concentrated on Washington conferences rather than regional sessions for two reasons: (1) we are able to train more CLOs in DC and, (2) it is more cost-effective. The next scheduled Washington conferences will take place in September and October 2002. In each case, we will include 30 participants. By the end of this fiscal year, we will have trained 72% of the CLO corps.

In an effort to maximize training, we have expanded the training session from 5 to 7 working days. Training evaluations have consistently indicated that 5 days is not sufficient to cover the eight areas of CLO responsibility. (To review the eight areas of responsibility, visit the FLO web site at <http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/c1964.htm>.) The expanded training will include greater emphasis on family member employment issues, as well as use and development of web sites and databases to support the CLO function. The

increase in days will also provide more opportunities for consultations with the bureaus and interface with FSI students.

Long-Term Care Insurance Update

Open Season July 1 to December 31, 2002. Open season applications will be available at <http://www.ltcfeds.com> starting on July 1. You can put your name on the mailing list to receive an open season information kit, including application, by calling 1-800-582-3337 (TDD 1-800-843-3557). Open Season kits will be mailed out in July.

According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), "The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program is an important new benefit for over 20 million members of the Federal Family, including Federal and Postal employees and annuitants, members and retired members of the uniformed services and qualified relatives." OPM contracted with John Hancock and MetLife, who formed a joint venture called Long Term Care Partners, to provide this insurance.

For more information on long-term insurance through the U.S. government, check with your HR officer or visit the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) web site at <http://www.opm.gov/insure/ltc/index.htm> or <http://www.ltcfeds.com>

July 4th Picnic in the Washington, DC Area for Returning Families

Sponsored by the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide and
The Foreign Service Youth Foundation

WHO: All members of the Foreign Service community: FSOs and their families.
WHAT: Potluck barbecue
WHY: Come for good food, great conversation and lots of fun and games.
DETAILS: Bring your own meat for the BBQ & a dish to share for 8 people. We will have crafts, volleyball, water balloon toss, relay races and games.

Sodas provided by the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide (AAFSW).
Crafts provided by the Foreign Service Youth Foundation (FSYF).

Please contact Playgroup@AAFSW.org for more information.

Other upcoming activities sponsored by the Foreign Service Youth Foundation include:

AWALers (AGES 13-18) - Come meet with other FS kids who've lived overseas at the **AWAL Basement Meetings** and **Wings of AWAL** newsletter production meetings.

GLOBE TROTTERS (AGES 9 - 12) - Come and join the fun as kids put together the newsletter. ***Here, There and Everywhere at the*** production meeting.

Splash Down Waterpark Day Trip

Six Flags America Adventure Park Day - the whole family can come along!

Welcome Back Family Picnic - FSYF supplies hot dogs and drinks. Each family brings a dish to share for this potluck.

For more information, check the FSYF at <http://www.fsyf.org>.

Summer Visits: Checking on Elderly Parents

This time of year reminds us that when members of the Foreign Service return to the United States on home leave, summer vacation, or for a U.S. assignment, they are often faced with making decisions about elderly loved ones. For employees and family members overseas, FLO's Caring for Elderly Parents paper (<http://www.state.gov/m/dghr/flo/rsrscs/pubs/2048.htm>) can help in making long-distance caregiving decisions and resolving the issues involved in taking an elderly parent on assignment. We highlighted this paper in the March issue of *FS Direct*. For those of you returning to the Washington, DC area, information about lunchtime seminars on "Caring for Your Aging Parent" and "Active Aging," and periodic Eldercare Fairs is available from the Office of Employee Relations, Work/Life Programs (HR/ER/WLP) at 202-261-8180. The Employee Consultation Service hosts an Eldercare Support Group, open to Foreign Service employees. The group meets weekly under leadership of licensed clinical social worker. For more information, call the Employee Consultation Service (MED/ECS) at 202-663-1815.

Finally, don't forget that Department of State, USAID, and Department of Justice employees and their family members can get help from LifeCare in researching adult care programs and providers in any U.S. location. Just call 800-873-4636 or send request for assistance to specialist@lifecare.com. Visit LifeCare on the web at <http://www.lifecare.com>.